**Platt Hall Open Door programme October 2019- January 2020**

**Summary Report**

1. **Background**

**What we did**

Exploratory discussions at the beginning of the EFCF project indicated there was considerable local anxiety/confusion around what had happened at Platt Hall since its closure in 2017, leading to negative speculation. We decided to invite people back into the building to see how much has happened and begin the process of public discussion about the future. From November to February we held eight public discussion events in the Hall, each event comprising up to 10 participants plus staff. The aim was to introduce and/or re-acquaint people with Platt Hall, to enable them to see for themselves the opportunities and challenges that the Hall represents, and begin a collaborative process of rethinking Platt Hall’s future identity. Four objectives were identified:

* Update on what has happened since the GoC closed, including costume conservation, roof repairs, and heritage evaluation - countering perceptions locally that nothing has changed.
* Enabling people to experience Platt Hall for themselves – its atmosphere, its different spaces, its relationship to the immediate area – and sharing initial research into the history of the Hall.
* Exploring collections in the context of the Hall, including those related to the Hall’s history (not just costume), to inform thinking about the potential uses of collections on this site.
* Open discussion to explore ideas for the future of Platt Hall in the context of local need, history of the neighbourhood, diversity of the collections, and opportunities and challenges of the building.

Each session comprised an update on recent developments, a tour of the different spaces including a sound mindfulness exercise, a short history of the building with archive material, and a handling session with objects from the collection. We then facilitated a discussion around two key questions:

* What principles and values should the development of the Hall embody?
* What are the needs of the local area?

**Who came**

The events were targeted at anyone who lives, works or has a connection with Rusholme, Moss Side or Fallowfield. The intention was to encourage cross-community participation, bring together different perspectives from the local neighbourhood and encourage different groups to speak to each other. It was promoted via MAG and Platt social media, the Age Friendly Newsletter, the Rusholme, Moss Side and Fallowfield Civic Society, and existing MAG Learning Team and Platt Hall networks. Dr Abi Gilmore, researcher in cultural policy and everyday participation in culture from the University of Manchester, also attended as a participant-observer.

As a first step in the collaborative process, it mainly attracted those who already have an interest in, connection with or curiosity about the Hall. Most people who came either knew the Hall intimately, had visited at some point, or have wondered what it was. Six sessions were planned but demand was such that we held a further two, with a total of 79 participants. The majority were either resident in or had connections with the surrounding wards of Moss Side, Rusholme or Fallowfield. Ages were dominated equally by the 18-50 and 65+ brackets, and gender representation was approximately 75% female, 25% male. We did not record ethnicity, which was mixed but the majority of attendees were white. Further work is required to reach a wider and more representative spectrum of local residents, including those who are either unaware of Platt Hall or who may think it has nothing to offer them.

1. **Responding to the building**

**Existing investment/collective memory**

There is evidently a strong sense of love, passion and commitment to Platt Hall locally. Participants emphasised its uniqueness as a key part of the area’s history and its potential to offer something that is very much in need. The Hall is held closely in the collective memory of the neighbourhood – as a site of inter-generational experiences and memories, it has been an important part of many people’s childhoods, learning and everyday lives, both as a historical building and as a costume museum – these two identities are closely interlinked. But there was also a sense that Platt Hall has never fully achieved its potential, and a clear desire for it to become an active, well used resource for the local community.

*“I've lived in the area since 1989. And so, coming to Platt Hall has always been something that I've done. I used to hide in the café, if I wanted a quiet space, and people who were staying with me used to come. It's just such a nice size and I love the staircase. So I enjoy the building as much as what was in it.”*

*“My mum used to bring me when I was little because she just loved looking at the architecture, she didn’t really care about the exhibits, and was really sad when it closed, so asked me to come today.”*

*“Platt Hall is part of our lives. I came here as a child, brought my daughter and my granddaughter to the costume museum! Love the hall especially the staircase!”*

*“I’ve lived in this area for over 20 years, so I’ve visited the costume museum a fair few times. The collection was amazing, but the museum always seemed under-appreciated and under-used. Hoping it will now have a new lease of life and become a more integral part of the local community.”*

*“I'm a local resident and really in my fantasy world I would live in Platt Hall. And I'm just sort of interested in what you do with the building and I just want more stuff locally here that feels positive and good and not abandoned like Rusholme feels a bit.”*

*“I’ve grown up round here my whole life, and so many people I know didn’t even know this was here though they use the park all the time. And there’s a big community feel in Rusholme. I feel like if people knew about it and there were more links to the community it would be thriving.”*

**Responding to the space and its history**

Several participants described the Hall as a place of sanctuary, away from the busyness and demands of daily life. This was also reflected in responses to being in the Hall and experiencing the atmosphere of its different spaces. Themes that figured highly in discussion included its quiet peacefulness, its warmth and domesticity of scale (both big and little at the same time), an imagined sense of connection with the past, sunlight and shadows, and the proximity of the park. Living memory of the Hall is intimately connected with costume – few people knew about its earlier history and were surprised to hear of its previous identities as refugee accommodation, a labour camp, a police headquarters and an art school. They were also fascinated by the Hall’s current ‘inbetween’ state and the traces of its different identities evident in the worn floors and unpainted walls.

“*The building is very warm, it’s welcoming. I feel as if I belong here.”*

*“You can hear surprisingly little, very low background noise. The sense of quietness here is quite peaceful, it feels very safe.”*

*“So many shapes, it's not like the houses or the institutional buildings we are used to. Everywhere you look there's a shape interacting with another shape. And every light is being cast in lots of different ways. And the sun coming through. And the shadows that fall across the staircase are really beautiful.”*

*“The pillars! It’s like someone’s gone mad with the icing.”*

*“It feels like you are in a house and you can feel people upstairs. You know, it might be kind of the past in the house. When you live in a house you can sense when people are around.”*

*“I felt I was transported back in time. I was imagining somebody, a woman, coming down the stairs. It was like a hand on the banister, walking down the stairs, it was kind of like being taken back to the history of the building. It makes me think of rustling skirts.”*

*“The floor looks like a map to me but I like the way that that this stone is rubbed away and I was just thinking about all these old slabs, and I hope they don't get taken up because it's so lovely. Think of all the feet that have trodden here.”*

*“I really love looking at the view out. I was looking at the tree outside and thinking how wintry it all looks through the window. It is such a beautiful space connecting with the park and nature and there was this one tree that I've never noticed before, blowing in the wind in winter.”*

*“I didn’t know any of that earlier stuff. I’m wondering about the history of my little house over the road now.”*

**Responding to the collections**

Experiencing collections storage first-hand prompted wider conversations about how we all manage our possessions, and the familiar problem of ‘too much stuff’. Questions of value, accessibility and narrative potential came up in every session. Surprise juxtapositions of different kinds of object, and historic labelling on boxes prompted much curiosity along with a desire to make things more accessible. Objects on open shelving were an immediate draw and handling sessions prompted lots of conversation about familiar and everyday objects. A desire to explore the collections further through dialogue, co-curation and creativity was evident within all sessions, with many people feeling that they could offer time and resources to make this happen.

*“Such a lot of stuff, I have a lot of stuff at home. I'd like to get rid of some of it. Knowing what to keep and what to get rid of, or pass on to someone else, is difficult.”*

*“Horror, there is so much tidying up to do”* vs *“I think this is the neatest store room I’ve ever been in!”*

Abi Gilmore observed *“The great thing about the Mary Greg collection is that the everyday objects are relatively empty of meanings or prior fixed valuation as little is known about the objects apart from their apparent functions – you can put your own backstory onto them, so they help to not just make connections with everyday life, but to allow people to enrich their experience of objects held as valuable within museum collections – they are means to coproduce value since they support conjoining sets of meanings through the encounter with the object”*

1. **What people want/need**

Priorities identified in discussion included the following:

* A welcoming, inclusive and free dwelling place. A place that is relaxed and homely, where you can ‘drop in’, and just be for a while. That feels representative of the range of different people locally, where all people can belong. With good signage and exterior grounds that clearly convey that message. That is open more of the time and makes better use of the inside/outside aspect of being in the park.

*“It needs to be non-elitist – I want to say working-class but that’s not the right term – it wants to be the sort of place that an ordinary person, a kid wandering in from Moss Side or whatever, looks at that and thinks I’ve got a right to be there, that’s for me, not the sort of place that looks like I shouldn’t really be there.”*

*“It’s not just about being physically accessible, it’s about being welcoming, inclusive, thinking about the people that live in this area, the wealth of different kinds of people, and making them feel they can come in and use this space because that’s not happened in the past.”*

* An affordable café/kitchen and accessible toilets. This is fundamental. ‘Not like the Whitworth’ a comment that came up multiple times in relation to the cafe – too expensive, too ‘middle-class’. Café should be ‘not corporate’ – something community-run, simple, cheap and ‘homely’, and accessible for park users at different times of day. A kitchen as much as a café - where you can bring your own food, and cook together.

*“We don’t have anywhere in Rusholme in the way of a café if you just want to meet someone for a coffee. You have to go to Fallowfield to Sainsbury’s – the cafes here are more like shisha bars.”*

*“I have three kids under seven and I don’t come into this park anymore because I’m not prepared to use the loos, and they always need a drink or something. Now we get in the car and go somewhere else and that’s awful.”*

* A place of creative making spaces and activities. Skills development and skill-sharing, with a particular emphasis on life skills and sustainability - repair, make-do-and-mend etc - but also preservation of domestic crafts and hand-making. Seeking out and valuing skills already present in the local area - programmes that enable people to contribute their skills as well as learn new ones. Providing spaces for both entry level creative activities and expert masterclasses – eg. life drawing, ‘knit and natter’, reading groups, cooking. Shared spaces, public spaces, drop in spaces for makers and artists to come together, combating identified lack of studio or maker space locally. Guidance and support (through social prescription) for those less confident about getting involved.

*“I would like to see a place of making that young people and families and can come in. And have access to materials that they could they could make and do with - a permanent work space that you can just drop into, bringing people together*.”

*“I'm keen to see community textile projects, particularly green projects, finding ways to recycle. The textile industry is the biggest polluter in the world. And so to get a green project going explaining it's the biggest polluter and what we can do to recycle our clothes and to have a make and mend. I think there's just huge potential for the space and for engaging local people who probably have skills but don't value them.”*

*“Taking the heritage and traditions that relate to crafts and knowledge of materials that people had in the past and relating it to current creativity and adaptability – I grew up knowing how to strip a rush and put it in a rush-lamp, my Granny taught me, so tapping into skills that are only one generation away.”*

*“I’d like to workshops to teach you how to do home economics. Because we don't get taught the basics of how to run your household. Life skills, because we've grown up in a society where it's just, there’s your GCSE, get on with it. Today, you don't really know how to handle it, you just get thrown information, you regurgitate it onto a piece of paper, you get a grade. And then that's really all we get. We don't get actual life skills or learn how to manage ourselves.”*

* A place for collective engagement with social issues, especially the climate emergency. A very strong theme throughout discussions, which included a suggestion from the Terrace Square Artists Project group of making Platt a hub for neighbourhood action in response to the climate emergency.

*“Platt Hall as a local hub which makes visible the climate emergency declared by Manchester City Council. Creative and playful workshops aiming for a ‘convivial aesthetic’, formed with content arising from the new obligatory Climate Emergency Ward meetings. As a council-owned building, Platt Hall could be a publicly accessible place, where the local response to the urgency of climate breakdown could be demonstrated through generative and collective art activities.”*

* Collections as a resource that can be dipped into, explored, handled, interpreted and used in different ways, woven through other spaces and activities. Combining the familiar and homely with the quirky and curious. Surprises. Collections as conversation starters, sources of inspiration. Changing displays and ways of exploring them – unusual juxtapositions of the familiar and unexpected, things to handle and try. Mobilised collections - not stagnant displays that never change. And collections that reflect the diversity of the users.

*“I mean all those things, they’re really really interesting - the potential for intriguing people and getting them interested and the fact that these are commonplace people’s possessions, there’s something in that, about making people feel they belong, link to the things that remind them of home, and to expand on that, to explore people’s own homes and where they have come from.”*

*“What people love is a reflection of themselves. So artefacts that reflect lots of different cultures…a range of people. That makes them feel good about themselves.”*

*“I would like to see more space for non-British, non-European art. Frankly, I don’t think we have nearly enough.”*

*“The random combinations of things, I love that. What is in all these boxes?! They are just beautiful, really. They’re like stories. It’s the juxtaposition of items that would never be together, boleros and nurses uniforms!”*

* A place to celebrate local history, local artists, local culture, working with the building, not against it. Valuing the history of the area as a way of instilling pride and making it better in the future.

*“The history thing is really important, because Manchester’s not very good at thinking about or preserving or telling its own population about its own history, and that’s part of what Manchester is, fast-developing, industrial, knocking things down and building them up, but you have to take stock at some point, you need places where that can take place and this could be one of those.”*

*“For me, it’s the people involved in the history that’s the most important thing, about what’s in here reflecting the people, the communities around the Hall, it’s so important thinking about the future as well as the past, linking the past with the future, so it’s meaningful for everyone”*

*“The links around this area with art and history are just incredible, and there’s no recognition of it – if we had a heritage trail then this could be part of it, and with somewhere they can stop off, have a coffee, go to the loo.”*

1. **Other thoughts**

Key principles running through all this focus on using creative practice in its widest sense to promote wellbeing and community, making everything that happens at Platt environmentally sustainable, and working with communities as co-producers in the development process.

Critical need to actively diversify the relationships, narratives and voices at Platt. History of diversity in the area, range of cultures and class within a stone’s throw of the Hall, and the diversity of the collections not sufficiently reflected in the Hall’s identity currently. It needs to be more representative of the diversity of its neighbourhood. Some potentially important advocates for this among the participants though.

Importance of language – is it a museum, a house, a gallery, a community centre? Someone suggested art centre. What do we call it that people will understand? And critical need to improve communication, esp on the outside of the building, but also through digital media and an ongoing programme.

“Place, people, collections” venn diagram seems to work well – a good way to think about the multi-faceted and dynamic identity of the Hall. It also relates to the concept and methods around ‘place-making’, which could be worth investigating further as an underpinning philosophy for the project.

1. **Next steps**

Development of strategic partnerships based on three strands that will reach a wider cross-cultural demographic locally:

* Health and wellbeing
* Schools and families
* Nature and environment

Development of resources and programme for engaging with communities that don’t know the Hall.

Development of dedicated space in the Hall as a project hub, with materials, project data, selections from the collections, and a programme of community events, using the park where appropriate.

Improvements to the exterior of the building, using windows, railings, banners as appropriate to communicate development programme.

Digital space for Platt through creation of project blog that shares developments in real time, keeps people in touch, and invites contributions from partners, participants and volunteers.

Development of volunteer programme, focused on archives, collections and research into the histories of the Hall and local area.

Research into systems of governance and collective decision-making, trialling models of collaborative practice.

Development of longer term capital programme development, with community involvement in different aspects of the programme.

Ongoing audit of collections in discussion with curatorial team to develop proposals for longer term collections housing at Platt.

1. **Some concluding comments**

Participants noted their feelings at the end of the session. Overall extremely positive and hopeful but with some notes of anxiety about ways of engaging with local people and longer term MCC commitment to investment in the Hall and local area.

*“Hopeful but slightly worried. I hope that this space can be used by the public. I’m afraid that young people won’t engage well because the building is dated. Most young people don’t engage unless they can relate in some way’”*

*“It’s an exciting time! Full of possibilities! I love the way in which the history and past uses of the building have changed and that could inspire new use in the future”*

*“Very concerned. Don’t throw the baby out with the bathwater! Link existing expertise with local expertise and interest. Community is a slippery concept.”*

*“A super exciting space with a lot of possibilities. Let’s hope this will be a space for learning, whether or not it’s about collections or new skills, a space for reflection and fun for all. People need to feel part of the hall to ensure success”*

*“I am hopeful that the space will become a more inclusive, used community space for cultural education but wary of the potential for the building to become too detached from the park and community.”*

*“Really excited for the future of Platt Hall. There is amazing potential to create something really amazing that can really improve lives.”*

**Appendix 1: Participant statistics**

**Appendix 2: Principles and values – participant comments**

**Reflecting local culture and people**

For me it’s the people involved in the history that’s the most important thing…yes, that’s my thoughts too when we were upstairs, that’s the element I’d like to see…

That it involves a lot of people that live in the locality, including young people, so that everybody not just particular communities.

I think you've got to appeal to people and not just the cultured few if you like. You've got to appeal to the ordinary everyday people and make it interesting for them.

I think it needs to be non-elitist - I want to say working class but that’s not the right term… I want to say about inclusivity and accessibility… it wants to be the sort of building that an ordinary person, a kid wandering in from Moss Side or whatever, looks at that and thinks I’ve got a right to be in there, that’s for me, not the sort of place that looks like I shouldn’t really be there…it shouldn’t be intimidating…

It’s not just about being physically accessible, it’s about being welcoming, inclusive, thinking about the people that live in this area, the wealth of different kinds of people and making them feel they can come in and use this space because that’s not been happening in the past…

Bringing communities together not just separate groups. I'm sure it's fantastic but if you don't just segregate people in that way, not saying we're having this project for that group of people and this project for that. In a way you can have projects but unless they’re sustained and they're regular, you're only ever going to entice that particular group of people and you need to do it for lots of different people.

You do have to not necessarily hold hands but sometimes have a different type of activity and different way of maybe bringing somebody in the first time and then that enables them to then come independently.

What people love is a reflection of themselves. Children look in a picture book if they can see themselves and it has to be a bit like them. So artefacts which reflect lots of different cultures...a range of origins of people. Kids would love it if they could see themselves.

I think there should be a community feel. Because I've grown up round here my whole life Moss Side, Rusholme, Fallowfield and so many people I know didn't even know this was here though they use the park all the time, maybe every week, And there is a big community feel in Rusholme there is a there's a strong community. I feel like if people knew about it. And there was a lot more links to the community it would be thriving.

I would like to see more space for other non-British, non-European art. Frankly, I don't think we have nearly enough.

That's what shifts and changes audiences by role models, different presence of people. And I know after when we met we were talking about how some communities can feel quite hidden. Kurdish community can feel quite hidden. It was the first time I've been involved with the Manchester International Festival. And really I didn't know about that. But now I'm thinking next time can have a lot, because we have a lot of talent in this city.

Ways to profile and celebrate diverse cultures and talents in the area. And a longer programme so it's kind of not this kind of project and then like we did a great Somali women’s project here but then it ends if there’s no longer term approach.

**Skills**

Arts and crafts that are dying out, any of the arts and crafts, sewing, woodworking or anything, that are dying out. A refocus? Safeguarding skills, getting people interested in it would be a start.

I'm thinking sorry I envisage it being a making place as well. Not just to do with conservation because I think, to me it's a building that needs to be lived in.

Workshops for people. A friend of mine is involved in that group on a Friday at The Whitworth. Even like knitting but then having the old fashioned knitting machine just on the table.

But I think this is important to so that you don't just have staff offering workshops but have your local community.

I would like to see a place of making that young people and families and can come in. And have access to materials that they could they could make and do with.

So you’re talking about things like workshops, or even just have a permanent space work space that you can just drop into, towards your thinking around how do you bringing people together, just having a space that people can drop into and have access to, you know, art materials.

If we do similar things to the art gallery, I think it's ok, because maybe different people can't get there, they don’t have bus fare to go there, but in here maybe it's easier for them to access.

**Communication/welcome**

Somewhere safe, warm, welcoming. A place for, some kind of positive wellbeing and to contribute to people's general health.

I asked local people and they said 'I don't understand that building we can't go in, it's someone’s private house' and that's people that live in this area. i know there was a problem with signage, signage is a big thing because I think you were restricted because of the heritage rules but people never knew is it open is it closed. So people actually walk past it all the time. Really clear signage is needed.

I think it's the building itself like they don't understand the building it's obvious to us people that come here but they don't know, do you have to pay to go in, I can't afford to go in, is it free?

I think initially it's quite an imposing building. So how do you entice people who are just walking past? And lots of friendly signs outside. Even something saying 'come in' you know 'you're welcome'.

You need the building to be sort of known don't you, you know, whereas I wonder, can you actually get in? Is it open? What time is it open?

It needs a really good website doesn't it? You should do because this morning, just to make sure it was open and where we were going to park, you put Platt Hall on Manchester Art Galleries site and you look at the parking places, and it’s all about the art gallery.

We always came because it was a museum but it sounds a bit fusty now doesn’t it? I think we need to move along and call it something else. Gallery sounds much more lively doesn't?

We don't need a community centre because we have two. We might need an art centre. No we don't need a community anything we need an arts centre

**History of the surrounding area**

I think the history thing is really important, because Manchester’s not very good at thinking about or preserving or telling its own population about its own history and that’s part of what Manchester is, fast-developing, industrial, it’s always knocked things down and built things up, but you have to take stock at some point, you need places where that can take place and this could be one of those.

I think it's important, important to highlight the social history of the people who make who made all the fabrics, and who make all the fabrics. Now, I don't think anyone learns that in school.

A living library, using oral histories to tell stories.

**Relationship with the park**

I think the park is really well used in summer. But then obviously when the weather's not as good, there's nowhere indoors. So indoor communal space.

I think that people in this area we have a different background spiritually in this area. They need to be healthy and fit. And for that, maybe well just walking. Bring people here to include everyone.

What about the opening times? Is it going to be daytime? What about the idea of the summer being different from the winter as well?

Gardeners could come in as well. We were planting trees in the rose garden in November – if the gallery was open presumably there would have been public toilets we could have used – toilets is a really good shout, the ones we’ve got are horrible.

How much land is connected to Platt Hall itself apart from the park? Do you have a garden? Well, that would be fantastic to bring people into, And also a sensory garden.

Using this place as a meeting place and a starting off point because you were talking about going for walks and that you know a place where you know people will think oh yeah let's meet there.

To be involved in some festival and some activity as well about the walking in a park. The point is about bringing people together because they're close to the park and they can go to the park but some people they need someone else to socialise with each other and maybe in the future you can provide some training to the staff.

Following principles of ecology and respecting the non-human citizens of the park.

**Café/food and drink**

It should be quite simple, not hundreds of different meals and not corporate. A good example is Jodrell Bank, it was the same people that ran the Jodrell Bank cafe that ran The Whitworth Cafe and if you go now it's absolutely dreadful. It should be just nice and simple.

(WAG) It doesnt really work for families or I mean, I think, I might be wrong actually maybe it has got like a picnic area or somewhere you can go and bring your own food to eat inside. I have felt very uncomfortable taking children in there and I’ve been asked to leave – and my kids aren’t that loud but it’s not welcoming to kids and families. It’s not austere but it’s very middle-class, quite elitist, very expensive…if you want to take your kids out for a day unless you’ve got another mortgage then forget it…and that glass room is amazing but if you just want to have a drink in there – they weren’t making lots of noise but they were just being children…

If you go to the museum, on the top floor there’s a room with a big table where you can take your own food. The thought of taking your own food into the Whitworth – just imagine.

Will it be an affordable and sympathetic café, not a costa coffee or anything like that?

Somewhere to sit inside and outside, toilets, the sort of basic things. So you can just come in and go to the loo. And come in for a cup of tea.

**Exhibitions and displays**

Private artists and local artists able to show. I don't think emerging, get rid of emerging. Everything emerging at the moment and there is no room for anyone else.

When I came here it never felt enough. Because only a few costumes on display, so you walk around a few rooms and you think, I want to have a reason to spend more time here in this building, in this house, but once you’ve seen the costumes you feel you’re done… I brought my daughter here and the visit was too short.

Before, it was stagnant, you know what was on, you know, I know The Suffragettes as Supermodel, so people were coming back again they said to me well I'm not coming back again why don't you change the displays. So changing things maybe have them on for a month or two and that will bring people back again.

So you’ve got these two pavilions. And I particularly like the roof light business. So you open it right out and you have all this fantastic light in sunny Manchester! That so you could have a very special dedicated exhibition space that is different from the art gallery that would be offering very specific thiings for a while. I think it has a different fit. It's got to be you've got to define it differently from the art gallery.

It could be anything. It could be that it could be, you know, Trinity high has a special exhibition here or it could be that you say no, we're gonna have whatever yeah. Yeah, okay exhibition of work from Ghana. Okay, fine. So you'd have to do in conjunction with them. But this is our space (Rusholme, Moss Side, Fallowfield).

It could be quirky stuff. It could be something that has a different characteristic from the City Art Gallery.

Care, I'm talking more for people than collections. Yeah, I think that collection should be obviously looked after but in a prominent place within the gallery. Or just woven through everything within the gallery building, so collections woven through everything but sort of people woven through everything as well.

I would like all this collection to be the basis of a national costume museum. Although the hall is beautiful, it's nicely preserved, but if you think about National Trust places it's not that fantastic.

**Responding to the climate emergency**

Has climate come up because Manchester City Council declared a climate emergency this year, has that come up in the sessions? I mean, the emergency you can barely tell that there is an emergency. In an emergency there is a rush of resources to deal with it. And this is a resource maybe a hub of information from an arts perspective. An education.

**Participation**

A Friends of Platt Hall? How might that work with Friends of Manchester Art Gallery and Friends of Platt Fields? What about a community board or trustees?

Great model of volunteers, which is very interesting, is the Park Run you know, mass participation completely run by volunteers and obviously on our doorstep.

I'm just thinking about the model of Fallowfield library place, is that a mixture of payed staff and volunteers? How does it work?

**Appendix 3: Connections with the Hall – participant comments**

I first moved to Manchester 15 years ago, I've always had a fascination with fashion, costume and craft-making and textile design. I do work in Manchester. I'm actually on the board of the Manchester Art Gallery.

Moved to Moss Side and peered in through the windows, crawled round the back, sad to have missed it as the costume gallery, praying it would re-open. Curious about the house’s history, excited to glimpse inside.

I’ve lived in this area for over 20 years, so I’ve visited the costume museum a fair few times to draw the costumes or see different exhibitions. The collection was amazing, but the museum always seemed under-appreciated and under-used. Hoping it will now have a new lease of life and become a more integral part of the local community.

Interested in fixing clothes and upcycling in general. Regular use of Platt Park for skateboarding and picking fruit.

In the café working on my ipad and eating cake, enjoying the quiet, standing at the top of the stairs, going up and down admiring the stairs, and costumes from the 1960s. Being in the park – walking/meditating, loving the walk down the avenue.

I was at college in Fallowfield in the 70s. And I remember Platt Fields and I remember this building specifically. I don't know whether I actually ever came here but I did. But I have been to see exhibitions here over the years. The last one I came to see was probably two three years ago.

I have no associations with Platt Hall at all, but I have I lived in Fallowfield most of my childhood life. So I have long close associations with Platt Fields as a park.

I used to live over in Appleby Lodge. And I'm a writer and I write about fashion. So I've covered all the exhibitions Miles curated and interviewed Miles and did little tours and stuff like that. And, on this coming Saturday, I'm part of a performance thing and my story is based on something that happened here actually.

I live over the road near Brompton Road. And I've been a resident round here for three years, used to be at the university. And my connection to here is not so much through textiles, but through being a user of the park and being interested in local history. And I do have an interest in repairing old clothes. And I would like to learn more about textiles and how we can repair things. So that's my reason for joining.

I've lived in the area since 1989, and I lived on Boscombe Street. And so, coming to Platt Hall has always been something that I've done. I used to hide in the café, if I wanted a quiet space, and people who were staying with me used to come to the Hall. It's just such a nice size and I love the staircase. So I enjoy the building as much as what was in it.

I've lived in Manchester about 40 years pretty much in the same place down in Hulme. So I’ve come on visits to the park and the Hall. There used to be boats on the lake and a pets corner, I have come to a loads of events around here. And I appreciate textiles at The Whitworth but this is a lovely little house.

I'm a civil structural engineer and I've done historically quite a number of Manchester City Council's historic buildings. And interestingly this was a building I've never been in. So I think it's probably the last large building of Manchester that I've not looked at.

I used to visit regularly when I was doing my A levels in textiles and now I'm doing MA Art Gallery and Museum Studies.

I've been involved in doing some research recently, looking at what people value in their everyday lives and how they take part in arts and culture. And part of that research found out that parks were really important places to people, but also, I've now become interested in museums in parks. So I'm just getting to learn about and hear about Platt Hall and what it might become.

I've known Platt Hall most of my life. I've lived in the area and we used to come when I was child and I lived in Gorton and we used to come to the events in the park, and Platt Hall has always been in the background. And I came when I was a child to the Costume Gallery. I brought my daughter a lot of times because she went to school just at St. James across the way, and then we brought my granddaughter since then. And I was really sorry that it closed.

I live here, it's my house. No, I'm local. I have lived a few streets away for about 25 years. So I've got my family, my children went to St James too and were regular visitors to this gallery. Another thing is I'm an artist. So actually I've done a project that involved this place and lived in one of the vitrines temporarily downstairs and filmed it and used the film in a piece of art exhibited at The Whitworth So I have got lots of interest in this place. I'm also an art therapist, so I do lots of work with people. I'm very interested in what's going to happen here, I love this building.

I'm a green badge guide for Manchester. I'm one of 25 professional guides in the city. So this is not exactly on our route but I'm here on behalf of the 25 to see what's going on and feed back to colleagues.

I've been living in Manchester for about 15 years, often come past on the bus, never ever been in. And as I get older I get more interested in architecture and history.

I live in the area, so I come by the Hall and I visited before it closed so I just thought I'd see what's going. Do something cultural for an hour or two on a Saturday afternoon.

I live in the area and I’ve been coming here since the mid 70s. So have seen it closed and am just really excited about the next phase. I love museums and galleries.

I live on Horton road which is just over there, very close. And I spend a lot of time in the park. I'm really fascinated by the building. The family who used to live here, the history of it. But I'm also involved with a lot of different community projects and see that this would be a really good space for community.

I have lived around the corner since the 80s, and I've been part of projects here. I've taught textiles for Adult Education. I'm very keen to see community textile projects, particularly green projects, perhaps finding ways to recycle. The textile industry is the biggest polluter in the world. And so to get a green project going explaining it's the biggest polluter and what we can do to recycle our clothes and to have a make and mend. I think there's just huge potential for the space and for engaging local people who probably have skills but don't value them.

I came here as a school girl on a school trip. And I remember being really, really excited in the way that you could go around and look at everything. And I think it's the most beautiful building. And there's so much community interest in Manchester, particularly in this area. I just love the building.

I think what's so fantastic that we can make do and mend, which is very popular at the moment.

I'm a local GP, I've been to this Hall many times growing up, I grew up in the area, and this place was a big part of my formative years. Now I'm a GP, I'm a neighbourhood lead for Hulme and Moss Side for our organisation, which is a not-for-profit GP practice. I’m really keen to develop some close working with the projects that are ongoing here because we think we can be more than just about health. And we're keen to develop well-being and links into the community and become a real community asset.

I'm a local resident and live just off Platt Lane with my two daughters, and I'm an artist. I'm currently doing a practice based PhD and we've also started a residents and artists group called Terrace Square Artists Project, we're very interested in developing connections with Platt Hall.

I'm a local resident and really in my fantasy world I would live in Platt Hall. And I'm just sort of interested in what you do with the building and I just want more stuff locally here that feels positive and good and not abandoned like Rusholme feels a bit.

I came to Manchester to Rusholme in '87. I went away for 18 years and came back a year ago. So really really happy to be here. Love Platt Fields, love this area. In spite of the burglars but there we are really, really pleased. Love the building, used to come in and admire those Jane Austen type costumes.

I come from Iraq in 2000 and came to Manchester. And for 13 years I live in Rusholme close to Fallowfield. I know focus group [?] with ethnic health firms based in [?] in the offices there.

I have been a Rusholme resident since 2001 living between the parks and Birch Grove. Love the area hate the squalor and the rubbish from some of the students and landlords and I love cycling, I've come in on my bike today. And I kind of love art, I'm not an artist you know but I love this building and very interested in how it's going to fit into the future of our area.

I have lived opposite the Hall for about four years. And I came in, but it was it was open then occasionally, short opening hours. I'm the exhibitions curator of the Portico Library. And we are going through a period of exploring the future of our library as well. So it's quite interesting for me to see what’s happening here and, and we have a historic collection of books and for the last four years, I've been there kind of trying to work out how we can activate that collection for communities of Manchester and particularly those who haven't really got the most out of it in the past. So I'm very interested in doing something like this.

I came to Manchester 15 years ago, just up the road, and I've always wondered what’s inside this building.

I've lived in Manchester all my life, and I've been not regularly but certainly over the years, I've been on several occasions, and used to teach textiles. So I used to encourage the students to come along here and have a look as part of their studies and I'd come with them as well. So haven't been here for a long time, but it's very sad, in some ways, very sad when the building closed down. I think it's an opportunity to develop it to bring it up to the present day - I'm excited about it really and treasure the history.

I'm a fashion and textile student and I'm working currently on a live brief at Manchester Art Gallery to hopefully open like an exhibit of change in Manchester and stuff. So that’s an ongoing thing and I literally had no clue that this building even existed until my friend told me and then I found out that it was like, a costume museum and I was like that’s pretty cool.

I just came a lot when I was little with my mum because she loved just looking at the architecture, she didn't care about the exhibits. So she was very like sad when it closed for renovations, and when she heard about this she really wanted to come but she couldn't so she sent me.